Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Senior/Disabled/Medicare Reduced-Fare Program

San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) patrons may qualify for a Senior/Disabled/Medicare (SDM) reduced fare if they meet MTS's eligibility requirements. There are two ways to apply: through MTS's SHORT FORM or LONG FORM. Both applications are available on line at http://www.sdmts.com/fares_discounted.asp, at The Transit Store at 102 Broadway, San Diego, 92101, and at MTS's office at 1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000, San Diego 92101.

Who qualifies for an MTS SDM Reduced Fare?

1. Seniors (60 or older), Medicare, SSI, SSD, or DMV Placard recipients (SHORT FORM)

-or-

2. Persons with Qualifying Disabilities (LONG FORM)

What happens after filling out an MTS Short Form application?

Applicants can take their Short Form and proof of identification (as specified on the Short Form) directly to The Transit Store to purchase their new picture Compass Card for $7 and add fare whenever they want.

What happens after filling out an MTS Long Form application?

Applicants must complete, sign, and date the Long Form and then take it to their treating medical professional within 60 days to complete, sign, and date. After that, it can be delivered or mailed to MTS's Administrative Office for processing (no e-mails or faxes are accepted because original signatures are required on the Long Form).

What happens after submitting a Long Form application to MTS?

MTS staff date and time stamp the Long Form on the day that it is received by MTS. Long Forms are kept in a confidential, locked drawer. MTS SDM Program staff review the Long Form to make sure that it is complete and that the diagnoses fall within MTS's eligibility criteria. If the application is incomplete, MTS staff will return it (within 15 business days) to the applicant with a letter explaining what is needed. If the application is complete, MTS staff will contact the treating medical professional by telephone to verify their certification of the qualifying disabilities. Applicants' information is entered into a confidential database; this information remains confidential at all times.

Why does MTS need confidential disability information?

MTS must determine if a Long Form applicant qualifies for a reduced fare under strict guidelines outlined by federal transit laws. The disability must: (1) meet the definition of a disability under Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines and (2) must also require that the applicant needs special facilities, planning, or design to utilize MTS facilities or services as effectively as individuals without a disability.

What if a Long Form application is determined to be eligible?

MTS staff will send a letter to the applicant within 15 business days notifying them that their application has been approved. (There is NEVER any information about the applicant's disability included on the approval letter or e-mail.) The applicant can take the approval letter to The Transit Store and purchase a new Compass Card with a picture ID for $7 and add fare to that card whenever they want.

What if a Long Form application is determined to be incomplete?

If Long Form applications are incomplete, MTS staff will return the application with a letter (within 15 business days) to the applicant indicating what information is needed so the applicant can complete the missing information and/or take it back to their treating medical professional to have them complete the missing information. Once that information is provided, the application can then be resubmitted to MTS for determination.

What if the Long Form is determined to be ineligible?

If Long Form applications are considered ineligible, MTS staff will return the application to the applicant with a letter stating why it was denied. Applicants can appeal MTS's decision by sending a letter to MTS. MTS Executive staff will review the appeal letter, make a final determination, and respond to the applicant within 15 business days.

Why does MTS require proof?

The reduced-fare program is a significant benefit. An eligible applicant can save $54 a month once approved. Certifying applicants safeguards the program for those who truly qualify.